



# State of Louisiana

## Department of Environmental Quality



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**For Immediate Release:**  
March 26, 2004

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### ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

#### **DEQ TAKES PUBLIC SUGGESTIONS ON BEP**

BATON ROUGE – A new procedure at the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality will allow citizens to offer suggestions for beneficial environmental projects.

A BEP is an environmentally friendly project that a company agrees to do as part of a violation settlement, provided it is approved by DEQ. By using the DEQ web site, citizens now have a forum to offer ideas on these projects. The web address is [http://www.deq.state.la.us/enforcement/BEP\\_Information\\_Suggestions\\_Proposals.asp](http://www.deq.state.la.us/enforcement/BEP_Information_Suggestions_Proposals.asp).

By filling out a suggestion form, DEQ will be able to track environmental concerns in specific areas. A list, compiled from suggestions, will be available so companies can see citizens' concerns in targeted areas.

"If a company is going to participate in a BEP, this will give them an idea of what people want and what they need," said Mike McDaniel, DEQ Secretary. "The suggestions will also help us, at DEQ, focus geographically on what and where the needs are. This is an example of DEQ becoming more open. We are interested in what Louisiana residents perceive as environmental issues in their area, and this is a quick and convenient form of communication."

All suggested projects submitted using the online BEP form are not guaranteed to take place. However, companies that are trying to work out a settlement with DEQ that may include a BEP will be able to see a list of ideas that have been submitted by citizens in their area.

The newly instituted internet-suggestion process will allow more options to the existing avenue of ideas for beneficial environmental projects. The program was designed in response to citizens' requests to have a voice in the BEP process.

A list of current settlements, whether they contain a BEP or not, is available on the DEQ web site at <http://www.deq.state.la.us/enforcement/bep/bep.asp>.